

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action mailed May 16, 2007, the Examiner rejected claims 1 to 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Qureshi et al. (US 2003/0049986 A1) in view of Goldade et al. (GB 2,187,466). For the reasons which follow, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all claims.

I. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner contends that it would have been obvious to incorporate both a contact corrosion inhibitor and a volatile corrosion inhibitor as suggested by Goldade et al. in the inner barrier layer of Qureshi et al. motivated by the desire to provide corrosion resistance immediately adjacent and contacting the wrap and to hard to reach areas for sufficient corrosion protection. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Applicant submits, first, that a skilled person would have no motivation to combine the references and, second, that it is very unlikely that the corrosion inhibitor system of the Goldade et al. reference can in fact be combined with the multi-layer fabric of Qureshi et al. to produce Applicant's claimed sheet material.

Qureshi et al. states that the inner barrier layer 4 is impregnated with a vapor phase corrosion inhibitor that is preferably within a ratio of from about 0.5 to 10% by weight of the layer. He goes on to state: "A concentration of solid form vapor phase corrosion inhibitor within the above range has been found to produce a sufficiently high level of inhibitor vapor for an appropriate length of time to provide for extended and reliable corrosion protection for metallic items that are wrapped in protective wrap 1." (page 3, paragraph 47). Again, Qureshi et al. states that the fabric may provide reliable protection for a period of six months to two years (page 4, paragraph 48). A skilled person, reading Qureshi et al., accordingly has no motivation to alter or add to the corrosion protection system because Qureshi et al. specifically states that extended and reliable corrosion protection is already provided.

Considering next the issue of whether the corrosion inhibitor system of Goldade et al. could in fact be combined with the multi-layer fabric of Qureshi et al, Applicant notes that the Examiner provided a copy of only the abstract page of GB 2,187,466. The full Goldade et al. patent document (14 pages plus cover sheet) is available in online databases and Applicant

provides a copy of it herewith for the Examiner's reference. Goldade et al., as understood, teaches a polyethylene material plasticized with mineral oil and containing an oil-soluble corrosion inhibitor. In order to incorporate the corrosion inhibitor into the polyethylene, a high level of mineral oil plasticizer, namely 20 to 45% by weight, is required (page 3, lines 13-15; page 5, lines 4-10). The polyethylene is in the form of a polymeric matrix with a system of interconnecting pores that are filled with a solution of the corrosion inhibitor in the mineral oil (page 4, lines 7-11). The formation of the communicating pores in the polymeric matrix lowers the maximum mechanical strength and deformability of the material (page 4, lines 28-30). It is accordingly understood from Goldade et al. that the taught system of corrosion inhibitors, which can include as one option a combination of a contact corrosion inhibitor and a volatile corrosion inhibitor, requires a polymeric matrix filled with a solution of the corrosion inhibitor in mineral oil, the level of mineral oil being high. Applicant submits that it is very unlikely that such material could in fact be laminated to a scrim for use in a multi-layer fabric, as in Qureshi et al. Goldade et al. contains no suggestion that the film-like material could be laminated to a scrim, even though the issue of the mechanical strength of the film, and the lowering of the mechanical strength due to the communicating pore structure of the matrix, is of concern (page 4, lines 28-30). Rather, Goldade et al. states that the physico-mechanical properties of the material will be satisfactory for use as packing material if the content of polyethylene is above 50% (page 4, lines 30-34). Goldade et al. is accordingly teaching away from increasing the mechanical strength of the material by laminating it to a woven scrim - rather, the teaching is to increase the mechanical strength by increasing the polyethylene content.

Further, Qureshi et al. refers specifically to there being processing difficulties in preparing the inner barrier layer 4 when the level of corrosion inhibitor is above 10%. The skilled person would expect even greater difficulties in trying to incorporate the anti-corrosion system of Goldade et al., which includes a very high mineral oil content, into the laminated inner barrier layer of Qureshi et al.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that the person having ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the teachings of Goldade et al. and Qureshi et al. in the manner suggested in the office action.

For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 would not have been obvious from the combined teachings of Qureshi et al. and Goldade et al. and is allowable over the prior art of record. The remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 1, and are thus also allowable.

Submissions made herein regarding Qureshi et al. are without prejudice to Applicant's right to argue, if applicable, that Qureshi et al. is not a properly-citable reference against this application.

II. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0843.
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